

LENROOT PLEADS FOR UNITED NATION

Wins Wild Applause in House as He Lashes Extremists, Who Divide Country.

MUST PRESERVE LIBERTY

In a speech which many members of the House call the most brilliant and patriotic utterance on the pending international matters, Representative Irvine Lenroot of Wisconsin yesterday declared that a divided country is a greater peril than any possible war with Germany, and that the days of this republic are numbered if the House adopts the policy that "no matter what the provocation, we must not defend our rights with force."

Impression Upon Country.

Representative Lenroot prefaced his speech by saying the extremists on both sides of the question had done much to whip the waters into a turmoil, until "there is a general belief throughout the country that if Congress is called upon to act at all it will choose between a general declaration of war against Germany, intervening in the European war and a position that whatever the provocation, we may be, we will under no circumstances defend our rights with force."

He continued, saying: "In the present crisis with Germany I have felt that the best service a member of Congress could render his country was to refrain from discussing the matter on the floor until we were called upon to take some action. Unfortunately that has not been done, and extremists on both sides have been freely expressing their opinions until there is a very general belief throughout the country that if Congress is called upon to act at all it will choose between a general declaration of war against Germany, intervening in the European war and a position that whatever the provocation may be we will under no circumstances defend our rights with force."

Finds Others Agree.

"Believing as I do that neither of these positions correctly interprets the position of Congress, the President or the American people, I think it proper now to give expression to what I believe is the dominant sentiment of the House at this time. I have no authority to speak for any one but myself, but in conversation with my colleagues I find a very general sentiment in agreement with my own view."

"In severing diplomatic relations with Germany the President did only his duty. To have done less would have forfeited any respect the world still had left for us."

Not the American Spirit.

"If I understand the views expressed by the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. Moore, and some others, if this shall come to pass we must do nothing. No matter what the provocation may be, under no circumstances must we defend our rights with force. If this is to be the attitude of Congress and the American people then the days of this republic are numbered. We will no longer be a nation, for any people too cowardly to fight for their liberty on the sea. But, Mr. Speaker, that is not the spirit of the American people and when the time comes that will not be the spirit of this Congress. Representing the great American people here, we will vote to maintain by force, if need be, our liberties upon the sea, but that does not mean that we will vote a general declaration of war against Germany. It does not mean that we will intervene in the European war. It does not mean that we are to sit in and determine the terms of settlement of European questions. It means only that we are going to settle our difficulty with Germany by compelling her to respect our rights upon the sea."

Will Be War Upon Sea.

"If war must come, it will be a war upon the sea, destroying every German submarine that we can and protecting our own ships until such time as Germany shall cease to be an outlaw upon the sea. When Germany shall again respect our rights our quarrel with her will be over and we will be ready to make peace with her, regardless of European nations or European quarrels."

"I believe the American people and this Congress will stand for this policy and that those who would drag us into this world war for reasons other than maintaining our own rights and those who are for peace at any price together constitute a very small minority."

"American Citizens Only."

"If we are called upon to act in this matter it will be the greatest responsibility ever laid or to be laid upon any of us. If any member in this House influences a referendum by party politics, by prejudice, by sympathy for either side in the European war he will be untrue to the oath of office he has taken here. If ever in our lives we should be American citizens only it will be then."

"Propaganda Cause of Peril."

"The propaganda now going on throughout the country to avoid war at any cost is a greater peril to the republic than war with Germany would be. The proposition for a war referendum is likewise a great peril. Suppose at this time a referendum were held. Suppose 10,000,000 votes were cast, 5,100,000 for war and 4,900,000 against. If war is declared on this vote does it require a prophet to foresee possible civil war among ourselves? Or suppose 4,900,000 voted for war and 5,100,000 against, and we refuse then to exercise force to maintain our rights, how long would it be then before we would have placed upon the seas anywhere? And, with impunity, shutting us out when to her advantage, and Germany doing likewise when to her profit."

Must Preserve Liberties.

"We each have duties and responsibilities here which we can delegate to no one, chief among which is to do that which will best preserve those liberties which the fathers of the republic gained for us and preserve this Union which we have each sworn to support."

Representative Garrett told the House

that the country seemed to have lost sight of the fact that the main issue is merely the broken diplomatic relations and that the jingo talk is dangerous to the peace of the country."

Representative Gallivan, Massachusetts,

said it would be monstrous to plunge the country into war just because a submarine sinks a ship carrying munitions to a belligerent. Representative Reavis, Nebraska, advocated enforcement of American rights by armed neutrality.

BERNSTORFF MAY STAY AT HALIFAX FOR A WEEK

British Authorities Likely to Need That Much Time in Examining the Cargo of Ship.

By the Associated Press.

HALIFAX, N. S., February 17.—Count von Bernstorff, former German ambassador to the United States, and members of his party, homeward bound on the Scandinavian-American steamer Frederik VIII, had a comparatively quiet time aboard ship in British waters here today. They were free from every possible source of disturbance, for no one except government officials and inspectors was permitted to pass the cordon of naval boats of every description that steamed back and forth near where the Frederik was at anchor in Bedford basin.

The monotony of the enforced stay was relieved somewhat when a batch of American newspapers was taken aboard, to be eagerly read by Count von Bernstorff, who is known to be keenly interested in the development of the international situation, since his departure from New York Wednesday. All editions of the local newspaper were sent to the ship during the day, and these constituted the stock of information obtained by the former ambassador and several hundred German consular agents with him, as there was no mail to be picked up here.

Tauscher and Von Igel Unmolested.

There was a stir along the water front during the afternoon over reports that Hans Tauscher and Wolf von Igel, indicted in the United States some time ago for an alleged attempt to destroy the Welland canal, would be taken off the Frederik under orders from London. Admiralty authorities declared such reports were without foundation. It was pointed out that Tauscher was acquitted and that the State Department at Washington had ordered von Igel's bail bond canceled. He had never pleaded to the indictment.

BELGIAN RELIEF MAY GO ON.

New British Zone Leaves Open Channel for Food Ships.

Possibility that the new and more concentrated danger zone announced by the British for the North sea may permit the sailing of the whole Belgian relief fleet is being considered here. It is understood that Great Britain's move allows a narrow open channel between her zone and that of the German's through which relief ships might pass.

Herbert C. Hoover, chairman of the commission, conferred with Assistant Secretary Phillips before leaving for New York last night, and announced that the Belgian relief work would continue as heretofore until some new eventuality came up, and that very possibly he might return to Europe.

DAMAGE SHIP HERE BY IMPERIAL ORDER

Men Disabled German Liner in U. S. Custody by Direction of Captain, Latter Says.

OBEYED HIS GOVERNMENT

By the Associated Press.

BOSTON, February 17.—The North German Lloyd passenger liner Kronprinzessin Cecilie, while in the custody of a United States marshal under a libel order from the federal court, was deliberately disabled at the direction of her German commander.

Capt. Charles A. Polack so testified in the United States district court, today, and added that he, in turn, had taken his orders from the German government. The damage to the vessel was done on the night of January 31, three days before diplomatic relations between the United States and Germany were broken off. Under examination by counsel for the libellants, Capt. Polack said that on that day he had received orders to render his vessel unworthy from an unnamed official of the German embassy at Washington.

Tense Moment in Court.

It was a tense moment when the witness was asked the name of this official. He hesitated and then, turning to the court, made this plea:

"Your honor, I am an officer of the German navy, and if I should have to disclose the name of the gentleman in this hearing I might be tried for treason when I went home to Germany. I am not going to oblige me to answer that question."

Judge James M. Morton, Jr., concluded privately with counsel for the libellants and the owners of the Kronprinzessin Cecilie for a few minutes, and then announced that as the attorney for the plaintiffs had not dis-

posed to press the point, the court would not insist upon an answer, as no good purpose would be served thereby, and particularly as the reply might be of momentous importance to the witness.

Banks Labeled Vessel.

The Kronprinzessin Cecilie was bound from New York for Plymouth and Cherbourg, when her commander was warned that war had been declared. He turned back and found refuge at Bar Harbor, Me. On board the steamer was gold shipped by the Guaranty Trust Company and the National City Bank of New York to bankers in London and Paris, and these banks labeled the vessel, claiming damages of \$2,300,000 because of the failure to deliver the consignment. In November, 1914, a United States marshal took possession of the steamer, which was brought to Boston, where she has since been tied up.

When Count Bernstorff was given his passport the libellants sought protection of the vessel from damage by the crew, with the result that United States Marshal John J. Mitchell took physical possession of the ship, putting the German captain and crew ashore. It was then found that the machinery had been tampered with, making it impossible to navigate the vessel until many and expensive repairs had been made.

Action by Court of Appeals.

The libellants sought damages in the United States district court, where they were refused. They appealed and the United States circuit court of appeals overruled the lower court and sent the case back for a hearing on a petition for the sale of the ship, which was heard today, and for the assessment of damages, arguments on which will be made March 2.

The plaintiffs alleged that the vessel had been wantonly damaged and asked that she be sold forthwith. Counsel for the owners asked for a delay of two weeks until orders could be received from the officials of the North German Lloyd line at Bremen and also that the case be delayed until the Supreme Court had passed upon the owners' petition for a review of the case, which was expected March 5.

No Standing in Court.

This request came after the testimony of Capt. Polack and the court replied that the owners appeared in contempt and so had no standing in court. The court ordered that the vessel be sold by the marshal on April 11 unless on or before February 21 the owners had furnished a bond of \$200,000 to repair the machinery damaged and

protect the steamer from further injury. The cost of maintaining the ship, finding the disposition of the case, also put upon the owners. The court did not indicate whether any action for contempt would be taken against Capt. Polack or Chief Engineer Sigmund Bierans, who was entrusted with the work of rendering the machinery of the Kronprinzessin Cecilie inoperative.

Called to New York.

Questioned by Attorney Edward E. Blodgett, counsel for the libellants, Capt. Polack said that last spring, soon after the steamer Sussex was sunk, he was summoned to New York by his company's office and introduced to a gentleman who said he represented the German government. This man told him that trouble had arisen between the United States and Germany and it was about time for him to destroy the ship's papers. He was warned that his ship should not fall into hostile hands.

In subsequent questioning Attorney Blodgett insisted that the witness had spoken of a "responder" instead of a ship, inference being that the captain had received orders also to have damaged the two other vessels of his line tied up here, the Koln and the Wittekind. The witness was positive that he had spoken only of his own ship, but Judge Morton intervened to say that he also had understood the witness as speaking of ships. Capt. Polack, however, repeated that he had reference only to his own vessel.

Agree on Code Telegram.

Returning to Boston, he arranged with his chief officer and chief engineer for the disabling of the ship upon the receipt of a code telegram which he was to send. On January 28 he started for Hot Springs, Ark., but stopped over in New York. During his stay there he received his orders to damage the ship, and on January 21 dispatched the message agreed upon to his first officer. Returning to Boston that night, he found the chief engineer engaged in crippling the machinery.

Mr. Blodgett asked when and where he received his orders and the witness replied: "January 31, at the docks of our company in Hoboken. I was in the office just before noon. Others present were the superintendent of the company, Capt. Moller, and a representative of the German government. I was already in the office of the superintendent when the latter gentleman came in."

Dispose of Identity Question.

The question of the identity of this gentleman was then disposed of, after which the witness continued: "I was just taking leave of the superintendent when the other gentleman said: 'The relations between the

two countries are being severed. The condition is very serious.'

"I started to take my leave. He said, 'You remain here,' and I remained. 'I asked: 'Now, shall we do what has been agreed to do to our engines?' He said, 'Yes.' The superintendent did not say anything."

Asked what had been agreed, the witness described his earlier visit to New York.

For hotels and similar places a new meter-driven machine will wash and sterilize 1,800 drinking glasses an hour.

EXEMPTION LAW IS VALID.

Farm Loan Board Corrects Impression Prevailing in West.

To correct reports published in Kansas and other western states to the effect that Attorney General Gregory had given an opinion holding unconstitutional the law exempting from taxation mortgages taken and bonds issued under the farm loan system, the farm

loan board issued a statement yesterday, saying:

"The fact is that the opinion of the Attorney General declares the law perfectly constitutional. The newspaper statements which have created widespread uneasiness are exactly opposed to the facts. Farm loan bonds are declared by the Attorney General of the United States to be legally and constitutionally exempt from all taxation."

The first crematory in the Netherlands was in Amsterdam.



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